CLAIMS

1. A method of handling a load at a high desired load handling position using a mobile loading machine of the kind having a loading arm connected at one end to a body of the machine for movement at least about a generally horizontal axis between a lower travelling position, and a higher load handling position, and the arm having at its outermost end a loading implement for carrying the load, the method including the steps of manoeuvring the machine with the arm in the lower travelling position generally below the load handling position, and then one of:

a) directing a signal from the machine upwardly towards the load handling position in a plane in which a reference point of the loading implement is movable as the arm is raised about the generally horizontal axis, or

b) directing a signal downwardly from at or adjacent the load handling position in a plane in which a reference point of the loading implement would be moveable if the arm is raised about the generally horizontal axis with the machine in a correct lateral position,

to ascertain whether the machine is correctly laterally positioned so that if the arm is lifted, the loading implement is positionable at the load handling position, manoeuvring the machine as necessary until the machine is correctly laterally positioned and then raising the loading arm to raise the loading implement towards the load handling position.

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the signal is directed from the machine upwardly towards the load handling position, and the signal is light which is directed as a fan of light in the plane of movement of the reference point.

3. A method according to claim 1 wherein the light is high intensity light such as collimated laser light.

4. A method according to claim 1 wherein the reference point of the loading implement is a laterally central position of the loading implement, which lies generally along an elongate axis of the loading arm.

5. A method according to claim 2 wherein the light is directed upwardly towards the load handling position from an illuminating device carried on one of the loading arm and the body of the machine to direct the light in the plane.

6. A method according to claim 1 wherein the signal is directed from at or adjacent the load handling position downwardly towards the machine, and the signal is receivable by a receiver of the machine at least when the machine is correctly laterally positioned.

7. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein where the arm includes a plurality of relatively telescopic sections, the method including extending the arm to move the loading implement axially of the arm towards the load handling position.

8. A method of handling a load at a high desired load handling position using a mobile loading machine of the kind having a loading arm connected at one end to a body of the machine for movement at least about a generally horizontal axis between a lower travelling position, and a higher load handling position, and the arm having at its outermost end a loading implement for carrying the load, the method including the steps of directing a signal from at or adjacent the load handling position downwardly towards the machine and

manoeuvring the machine with the arm in the lower travelling position generally below the load handling position, until the signal is received by a receiver of the machine to indicate that the machine is in a correct lateral position so that if the arm is raised, the loading implement is positionable at the load handling position, and then raising the loading arm to raise the loading implement towards the load handling position.

9. A method according to claim 8 wherein one of a signalling device and a target is located at or adjacent the load handling position, from which the signal passes to the receiver.

10. A method according to claim 8 wherein the receiver is located adjacent the machine operator so that the machine operator may use the receiver directly visually.

11. A method according to claim 8 wherein the receiver is provided by a camera which provides a signal to a screen viewer which is viewable by the machine operator.

12. A mobile loading machine of the kind having a loading arm connected at one end to a body of the machine for movement at least about a generally horizontal axis between a lower travelling position, and a higher load handling position, and the arm having at its outermost end a loading implement for carrying the load, the machine being manoeuvrable with the arm in the lower travelling position to below a high load handling position, the machine further including an device for directing a signal upwardly towards the load handling position in a plane in which a reference point of the loading implement is movable as the arm is raised about the generally horizontal axis.

13. A machine according to claim 12 wherein the signalling device produces a fan or beam of light.

14. A mobile loading machine of the kind having a loading arm connected at one end to a body of the machine for movement at least about a generally horizontal axis between a lower travelling position, and a higher load handling position, and the arm having at its outermost end a loading implement for carrying the load, the machine including a receiver, the machine being manoeuvrable with the arm in the lower travelling position to generally below the load handling position, as necessary until a signal from at or adjacent the load handling position is received by the receiver to indicate that the machine is in a correct lateral position.

15. A machine according to claim 14 wherein the signal is light and the receiver is a viewer which is located adjacent the machine operator so that the machine operator may use the viewer directly visually.

16. A machine according to claim 15 wherein the receiver is provided by a camera which provides a signal to a screen viewer which is viewable by the machine operator.